



PHOTOGRAPHY/DON GRAYSTON

Map shows the location of the Mirror Lake Highway, for a scenic fall trip. The Kamas Inn, above, now a bed & breakfast, was built in the 1800s.

## Along the Mirror Lake Highway . . .

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from Highway 40 not long after you've taken the Heber City exit off I-80.

If you want to make a weekend of it, however, camp overnight in one of the 16 available campgrounds, or go backpacking along any one of a number of trails leading into the high country. Or spend a night in Kamas, which serves as a reminder of what rural America is really like.

Following are some specific recommendations.

#### KAMAS INN

"If you want to stay at the Hilton, you're in the wrong place," says Karen Mueller. "Kamas just doesn't have a Hilton." Karen, with her husband, Joe, and her mother-in-law, Cindy, owns and operates the Kamas Inn, an 1880s hotel turned bed and breakfast that sits smack dab on the main street of downtown Kamas.

tributed across the country." Customers are also impressed with the variety of food choices that are available, he says.

If you think you must order a large piece of furniture, you're wrong. The shop will make simple items, as well, such as wall chests, peg racks, cutting boards, exotic paperweights, sawbucks, and boxes. For more information, contact the shop.

Walrus Woodworking Workshop and Showroom, Route 189, Oakley, 1-877-5530, is open from 8 to 5, but if you're coming from Salt Lake City, it's best to call ahead.

#### CAMPING

There are 16 developed campgrounds with picnic tables, fire circles, piped water and vault toilets, and three picnic areas in the Kamas Ranger District. The camping fee at established campgrounds is \$4 or \$5 a night.

There is no charge for picnic sites. The most popular campgrounds are Cobblerest, Shady Dell, and Soapstone. Upper Provo River is one of the popular picnic sites. The Forest Service has already begun shutting off water at higher elevation campgrounds.

Several campgrounds, however, are left open until after deer season, including 22 units at Mirror Lake, 10 units at Trial Lake, 12-14 units at Cobblerest, and units at Soapstone and Shady Dell. Campers are welcome to use sites until the snow flies. They must, however, bring their own water. Rangers advise against drinking from streams and lakes because of *Giardia lamblia*, a parasite found in many wild and domestic animals, including beaver. The parasite causes gastrointestinal disorders. If you must drink the water, boil it first, for at least 10

minutes.

"Most of the water is OK to drink, but if someone does drink the water, and then gets sick, they're knocking on our doorstep," says Dan Symmes, recreational forester with the Kamas District. "If you drink the water, you must realize you're taking a risk."

Symmes says the likelihood of picking up the parasite depends on how close you are to the source of the water. "The closer you are to the spring source, the less likely you'll pick up a parasite," he says.

And according to Symmes, now is an ideal time to camp. "There are no bugs, fewer people, and the colors are changing," he says.

For information about camping, contact the Kamas Ranger District at 1-783-4338.



Provo River Falls is one of several picturesque stops.

#### HIKING/BACKPACKING

What's good for the camper is good for the backpacker. The Mirror Lake Road gives you access to a number of trailheads that lead into the High Uinta Primitive Area, including the Highline trailhead, the Mirror Lake trailhead, and the Rocky Sea Pass trailhead. A new trailhead, called Crystal Lake trailhead, is west of Trial Lake, and gives you access to trails leading to Island Lake and Wall Lake, among others.

Wall Lake, only 1 mile from the trailhead, is a good day-hike for children. For more information on hiking,

contact the Kamas Ranger District, at 65 East Center St. in Kamas.

A word of caution: The Mirror Lake Road is paved, but portions are being resurfaced. That means you may be in for a delay or two. When I drove it, however, I didn't have to stop once for construction, and that was on a weekday.



Karen matter-of-factly calls the inn "one step up from camping." She also refers to it as a "mom and pop" operation. The "mom and pop" in this instance, however, are young, with three small children.

The first floor of the two-story building has a small ice cream parlor and a pizza and sandwich shop. Behind these are the living quarters for the Muellers. Five guest bedrooms, including one with a private bath, the shared bathroom, and a sitting room with a television are upstairs. Two of the bedrooms look out over Main Street toward the mountains.

Karen, pointing to the tilted wallpaper in the TV room ("we call this the 'tilt room,'" she says), and the faded bedroom carpets says the rooms will someday be redone. Improvements so far include new electrical wiring and new bedspreads. "We work on it when we can," she says. In the meantime, the decor is what she calls "rustic."

Even in its present condition, however, the inn was virtually full throughout the summer. "We had a lot of people who just wanted to get away for the weekend," she says.

The Kamas Inn is an economical place for bicyclers to stay who are heading up the Mirror Lake Road, or, later this year, for snowmobilers and cross-country skiers.

Kamas Inn, 80 South Main Street, 1-783-4453, charges \$20 a night per room, including continental breakfast. The rate for the room with a private bath is \$25 a night. Call for reservations. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

#### WALRUS WOODWORKING

John and Ruth Sundberg practice the art of furniture making in their small custom shop, Walrus Woodworking, in Oakley. Unless you have a discerning eye for the unusual, you might not even notice their combination workshop/home, which stands on the north side of a bend in the highway as you're going from Oakley to Kamas. But to someone who is looking for hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture, it is love at first sight.

Your heart may even skip a beat when you look at the quality of craftsmanship available here. The shop can work from a drawing, or will design a piece according to your specifications. Its most popular items include entertainment centers, dining room tables and executive desks. But it can create almost anything — from chests, to windows, to doors. The shop can produce furniture in a large assortment of woods, including teak, genuine mahogany, white oak, red oak, walnut, cherry, birch, ash and maple.

"People come to us because they want the things we've been practicing here for the past few years," says John, referring to the grain matching and the joinery they do so well. "Or people want to see a different shape of furniture from the things that are dis-